



CLEAN OHIO GREEN SPACE CONSERVATION PROGRAM

District 15 **Natural Resources Assistance Council (NRAC)** **PROGRAM YEAR 18 (2024) METHODOLOGY &** **SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION** **APPLICATION**

The information in this document relates directly to the District 15 NRAC Project Evaluation Methodology. The NRAC evaluation process utilizes the evaluation criteria outlined in ORC Section 164.24. The NRAC assigns points and weight factors to each of the evaluation criteria to determine which projects should be recommended for Clean Ohio Conservation funding.

CLEAN OHIO

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION & METHODOLOGY APPLICATION FOR DISTRICT 15 NRAC APPLICANTS

Before filling out this form, carefully read the District 15 NRAC Policies and Application Instructions, [which can be downloaded here](#). Pay special attention to eligibility requirements, all required attachments, and accepted delivery formats and deadlines. All questions in the Supplemental Information Application form are in bold. Please answer questions in regular unbolded font to assist readability for reviewing NRAC members.

Applicant Name: _____

Applicant email and phone contact information: _____

IDENTIFY TYPE OF SUBMISSION: (mark with X)

- _____ **A. NEW OPEN SPACE OR RIPARIAN CORRIDOR PROJECT**
_____ **B. SITE IMPROVEMENT OF PREVIOUSLY FUNDED PROJECT**

IF B is checked, provide the following information.

Clean Ohio Grant Code: _____

Grant Round: _____

Grant Application Name: _____

Specific Name of Site Being Improved: _____

(Please note that invasive removal funds can only be requested once for any one site. Also, if you have checked B, answer all questions pertaining to the land being improved, even though the land has already been purchased in an earlier Clean Ohio funding cycle.)

Note: If Applicant is proposing land acquisitions or conservation easement acquisitions, be sure to have all of the following required materials included in your digital application as FIVE separate digital files, with each file appropriately titled. All other reference materials may be included in the Appendix.

- a) a restricted or full appraisal prepared by an ODOT- approved appraiser for all parcels
- b) commissioner and trustee resolutions of support
- c) purchase agreement, purchase option, or letter of intent for all parcels
- d) District 15 financial spreadsheet on provided template [\(can be downloaded here\)](#)
See "Q" in the Methodology for further instructions.

Section One: Basic Eligibility & Information Gathering

A. Are you an eligible applicant? Provide OPWC subdivision code. Codes can be found on OPWC's website, <https://pwc.ohio.gov/Resources/Subdivision-Codes>.

B. Project purpose must involve at least one of the following from Sec. 164.22 A or B below, please mark with an "X": (If Applicant is applying for site improvements on a previously funded project, please answer regardless, recognizing that acquires means acquired.) (164.24 (A) (1) & (A) (7))

Open Space (Sec. 164.22 (A))

- _____ Acquires land for parks
- _____ Acquires land for public forests
- _____ Acquires land for wetland preservation or restoration
- _____ Acquires land for natural areas protecting endangered species
- _____ Acquires land for other natural areas
- _____ Acquires land for connecting corridors for natural areas
- _____ Open space acquisition
- _____ Permanent conservation easement
- _____ Constructs or enhances facilities necessary to make the acquired open space area accessible & useable by the general public.

Riparian Corridors of Watersheds (164.22 (B))

- _____ Protects enhances, restores or establishes riparian corridors or watersheds including the protection and enhancement of streams, rivers and other waters of the state.

C. Answer yes or no to the following questions. *Note: a no answer is required for eligibility.* Applicant may also provide very brief narratives and/or refer to other page numbers in the application containing further detail.

1. Would the project initiate or perpetuate hydro-modification projects such as dams, ditch development or channelization?

2. Would the project fund current legal obligations (such as fines, penalties, litigation expenses, mitigation or reclamation) under state or federal laws or local ordinances?

3. Would the project fund facilities other than those required to provide public access to or use of open space?

4. Would the project fund facilities for active recreation, such as tennis courts, ball fields or recreation centers?

D. Answer yes or no to the following questions. *Note: a yes answer is required for eligibility.* Applicant may provide brief narratives and/or refer to other page numbers in the application to supply further detail.

1. Does the project incorporate aesthetically pleasing and ecologically informed design including sensitivity to the terrain, natural resources and heritage of the property?

2. Does the project allow proper management of areas where safe fishing, hunting and trapping may take place in a manner that will preserve balanced natural ecosystems? The word “may” is intended to be permissive and not obligatory.

3. Does the project have 25% matching funds secured? Please describe the amount, the source, and in what form the matching monies are secure. (164.24 (A) (2) & (A) (3))

4. Can the property acquisition(s) be completed within 12 months from the date of the grant award, and can the proper improvements be completed within 24 months of the property acquisition date? (164.24 (A) (10))

E. APPRAISALS OF LAND AND CONSERVATION EASEMENTS by an ODOT-certified appraiser is required.

Fill out the table below for all parcels included in this submission. Improvement projects may leave this table blank.

parcel name	Auditor Parcel #	Acreage	Improvements	Appraised Value	appraised value/acre	Sale price

Note to Applicant. If Applicant is engaging in a bargain sale, a second review appraisal will have to be performed before the property can be purchased.

1. The name and contact information for appraiser who performed the appraisal is:

2. According to the auditor's site, what are the dates of the previous two property transfers for each parcel included and what were the sale prices of those transfers? If the auditor's site does not provide this information, Applicant can add sale information gained by other explained and documented means.

3. What is the auditor site's valuation of the parcels included in the application? *(it is recognized that this valuation may be outdated)*

4. Identify the person or party who negotiated the terms of the purchase offer. Is the Applicant aware of any realty or finder's fee borne either by the Applicant or the Seller? If so, please specify.

5. Is the Applicant anticipating a donation of cash or other assets from the Seller of the Property in the foreseeable future? If so, specify and explain the nature and amount of the donation.

F. A Title report is encouraged as part of the application for all land or conservation easement acquisitions. Answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge

1. Has a title report already been completed.

2. If a title report has been completed, what was the duration of the title report.

3. List all title matters that must be resolved before a clear title can be achieved.

4. According to Schedule B, list any rights that will not be transferred, such as pre-existing easements, mineral leases, and life estates. Justify that these retained rights will not jeopardize the preservation intent of the Clean Ohio program.

G. BUILDINGS.

1. Provide a list of structures present on each parcel, a summary of their condition, and their total current appraised value.

2. Include photos for each structure.

3. What is the value of the structure on site, if any, as a percentage of the parcels total appraised value?

4. Describe each structure's intended use, and future use or disposition. Include a narrative justifying their inclusion in the application.

H. **CONSERVATION EASEMENTS.** If a conservation easement is included in the proposal, provide proposed easement restrictions and the grantor's retained rights in the application and provide page number where the easement language can be found. You can find the OPWC conservation easement language on the website, <https://pwc.ohio.gov/Project-Administration/Clean-Ohio>.

I. **NEED FOR PROTECTION.** Provide a narrative justifying why these proposed parcels are in need of permanent conservation protection. If the properties already have partial protection, such as a pre-existing conservation easement, provide a narrative and supply the protection language.

J. **READINESS TO PROCEED** – Projects not scheduled for acquisition within twelve (12) months from the date of the Project Agreement will be rejected by OPWC and are not eligible. Provide a narrative and affirmation that this project's acquisitions can be completed within the required time period. (164.24 (A) (10))

K. **DIRECTIONS.**

1. Provide detailed directions on how a committee member may visit the property or properties on their own. May members enter the property without pre-arrangement or are they limited to a "drive by?"

2. District 15 NRAC members will be arranging a walking tour of the proposed acquisition or enhancement properties with an applicant representative. Applicant must arrange permitted entry with the property owner, plan and direct the tour, and limit the tour, when requested, to no more than an hour. Answer the following questions:

a. Provide directions to where the Applicant is arranging to meet the NRAC visitors. It is allowable to meet off the property and car caravan to a parking access.

b. Name of Applicant's representative leading the tour with phone and email contact information.

c. Describe terrain that visiting NRAC members should prepare for.

L. **PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT BACKGROUND.** The following questions are for property improvement proposals on previous Clean Ohio Projects only. If applicant is not submitting a property enhancement proposal, the questions may be left blank.

1. What is the project code of the previous Clean Ohio Project.

2. Has the original project grant been satisfactorily closed with OPWC? If not, provide details on what is yet to be completed. Provide narrative.

3. Have the conditions pledged in the original project grant been satisfactorily completed? Provide narrative.

4. In what ways has the property been properly managed and maintained? Provide narrative.

5. Justify benefits and describe public use and access for improvements. Provide page numbers for where their detailed descriptions of the site improvements can be found in the application.

M. If this project is part of a phased project, provide a full narrative of the phases planned.

N. LAND USE INFORMATION:

For the total of all parcels being submitted in this application, fill out the table below.

Number of Parcels	
Total acreage of all parcels	
Total Feet of waterway corridors (if will own both sides, double the footage)	
Total Number of acres in the following categories	
Forest (total)	
Mesic or Upland Forest (total)	
Scrub forest, successional	
Second growth, 40 years old	
Second growth, 40-75 years old	
Second growth, 76 or more years old	
Mature forest, no signs of cutting	
Wetlands	
Marsh habitat, open sunny	
Flooded forest	
Riparian/Floodplain Forest any age	
Meadows, Grassland, Agr Land	
Active croplands	
Active pasture or hayfields	
Land in CRP	
Abandoned farm fields	
Other Human Altered Habitat	
Old mining lands	
Oil wells, fracking hubs	
Landfills	
Manicured yards	
Other - list type	
Other - list type	
Other - list type	
Reconciled Total Acreage - adding together all shaded acreages	

O. MAPS

Include the following maps in this section of the application.

1. ROAD MAP SHOWING PARCEL LOCATION(S)
2. AUDITOR'S PARCEL MAP, INCLUDING IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT NEIGHBORS
3. TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP SHOWING PARCEL BOUNDARIES (showing elevation lines)

4. AERIAL MAP SHOWING VEGETATIVE COVER (such as Google Earth maps)

5. WATERWAY MAP SHOWING STREAM DRAINAGES and names of streams

P. BACKGROUND OF APPLICANT:

Provide a narrative of Applicant's agency or nonprofit with the following information: a) summary of missions and services, b) history of past engagement in conservation work, and c) number of acres of open space/preserves stewarded by the organization. If Applicant is a nonprofit, include the following information: a) number of full-time and part-time staff and their specialized roles, b) list of names of active board members, and c) year of inception.

Q. FINANCIAL SPREADSHEET - FILL OUT AND SUBMIT AS A SEPARATE ATTACHMENT. [\(can be downloaded here\)](#)

Fill out the provided excel spreadsheet to submit a detailed financial statement. List all parcels separately and list full appraised values and closing costs for each property, even if substantial acquisition funding is coming from a third party. If funds are coming from third parties, these funding sources and amounts must be included. List all site improvements as separate and detailed line items. For example, do not combine bridge building with invasive plant removal.

SECTION TWO – DISTRICT 15 SCORING

The following questions should be answered with a descriptive narrative. Be sure to document information sources for all claims and data provided in Applicant's justification. If Applicant has documentation elsewhere in the Application, such as in the Appendix, always include page numbers where the information can be found. If a claim is not documented and not common knowledge, the claim will not contribute to an Applicant's score. For example, if Applicant claims a waterway is designated by EPA as exceptional warmwater, Applicant should copy the webpage link, or copy the portion of the report that is the source of that information. If claims are documented in the Appendix or elsewhere in the Application, be sure to include the relevant page numbers.

1. Protects high quality or regionally significant biological communities. 30 pts

Scoring Criteria: 6 points per criteria:

1. Low level of disturbance such as ODA listed invasive plants, history of low human disturbance
2. Rare ecosystems being protected or restored
3. Exceptionally intact and healthy native ecosystem
4. Buffers a high quality ecosystem
5. Is a regionally-significant biological community

2. Preserves habitat for rare, threatened, and endangered species. 30 pts

Scoring Criteria: 1- 0pts-20pts, 2-5pts, 3-5pts

1. Documented rarities as supported by expert biologists and botanists
 - a. For a list of ODNR listed rare, threatened, and endangered species, [Start Here](#)
 - b. For a list of rare plants as listed by ODNR, [Click Here](#)
2. Ohio Heritage reports on site or within a one-mile radius*
3. Intact habitat known to support rare and endangered plants in similar nearby locations

3. Preserves and/or restores water quality in wetlands and/or riparian corridors. 30 pts

Scoring Criteria: 1-4- 5 pts per criteria, 5- 10 pts

1. Significant footage of riparian corridor protected within the protected boundaries
2. Protects or restores a forested waterway
3. Significant wetlands protected or restored
4. Protects the upper drainage of a significant water feature
5. Protects exceptional warmwater and/or cold-water habitats (Full points to be awarded if EPA-designated);
OR;
Restores floodplain functions and/or property has highly erodible soils to be preserved
 - a. For a list of EPA designated Warmwater and Exceptional Warmwater Habitats, [Start Here](#)^[1]

[1] Specific instructions on how to identify ODNR and EPA designations for assistance on your application can be found on OVRDC's website (<https://www.ovrdc.org/clean-ohio-program>)

4. Preserves a regionally important feature that is aesthetically, geologically, scientifically, or

historically significant. Opts-20 pts

Scoring Criteria: Points are awarded by the geographic scope of the significance.

- Examples: Ohio or National Register historic site, community known and highly regarded feature with attached documentation, location of recent or ongoing scientific research, other documented significant feature

5. Project contributes substantially to conservation due to project scale and context. 20pts

Scoring Criteria: 5pts per criteria

1. Large acreage acquisition (20 acres 1 pt, 40 acres 2 pts, 60 acres 3 pts, 80 acres 4 pts, 100+ acres 5 pts)
2. Lies adjacent to pre-existing conservation lands*
3. Provides a link between pre-existing conservation lands*
4. Supports formally adopted comprehensive open space planning

6. Project serves urban populations. 35pts

Scoring Criteria: 1-2- 15pts per criteria, 3- 5 pts

1. Acquires land for urban parks or acquires or enhances land for urban open space and is accessible to all people publicly without permit
2. Site lies within 5 miles (as the crow flies) of a city and serving those cities or within a mile of an incorporated village over 800 population
3. Property is ADA Accessible* (ORC 164.24(A)(8))

7. Project is associated with a separately funded plan for outdoor education engaging youth groups and/or the general public (164.24 (A) (4). 20pts

Scoring Criteria: 5pts by criteria

1. Organization has an established budget for youth education
2. Site master plan includes funded infrastructure for educational events and/or interpretive displays*
3. Public access, as evidenced by past history if appropriate, such as trailheads and parking lots without the need for permits*
4. Staff and volunteers trained and dedicated to educational services

8. Provides hiking trails and/or passive recreational opportunities for the enjoyment of the general public (164.24 (A) (8). 20pts

Scoring Criteria: 5pts per criteria

1. Provides development of trailhead parking and hiking, biking trails and/or development of public access for canoeing and/or kayaking*
2. Provides easy access to the general public for recreation without the need for permits*
3. Provides entry signs, road signs and trail signs.*
4. The project creates new trails that connect to pre-existing trails*

9. Provides substantial economic and social benefits (164.24 (A) (6)). 10pts

Scoring Criteria: 1: 4pts, 2-3: 3pts per criteria

1. Large geographic or demographic scale of benefits (county, multi-county, state-wide or large population served)

2. Substantial tourism benefits and/or associated employment opportunities
3. Serves a low-income and/or minority neighborhood

10. Project has documented public support on multiple levels. Provide page numbers. 10pts

Scoring Criteria: 2pts each, needs only 1 document from each category, Committee may ask for more documentation for full points

1. Local citizens and neighbors*
2. Community agencies and/or organizations*
3. State-wide conservation organizations*
4. National conservation organizations*
5. State and/or federal agencies. *

11. Applicant demonstrates ability to acquire full subsurface rights as documented by a 100-year title search. 10pts

Scoring Criteria: If subsurface leases exist, describe how impacts of leases will be minimized, describe what if any subsurface rights will be retained by any other party, give page numbers of appended subsurface leases.

1. To receive the full ten points, Applicant must demonstrate that the all subsurface and/or extraction rights of the parcels will transfer or be restored to the Applicant, and that there are no active gas and oil wells on the parcels. Otherwise no points are to be awarded.*

12. Fee Simple Acquisition. 10pts

Scoring Criteria: 10pts

- More points are awarded here dependent on how much of the purchase is fee simple acquisition as a percentage of acreage of the total purchase

13. Applicant demonstrates ability to capably steward the project once it is completed, and a thoroughly crafted management plan is in place and ready to execute (provide page number). 20pts

Scoring Criteria: 5pts per criteria

1. Budget supports dedicated and funded stewardship staff, cadre of trained and dedicated volunteers, access to stewardship equipment (tractors, work vehicles, mowers, etc.)
2. Experienced in land stewardship practices and successfully completed similar projects in past years.
3. Management plan is customized to site and detailed, including base line data, scheduling conservation practices to be performed, invasive plant management, recreational development and nature of public access.
4. Applicant has a history of clearly promoting visitor services and has history of sponsoring educational programs on its sites.

Additional Notes

1. Partial credit can be given for any criteria that is not marked with and asterisk*
2. In the case that two properties are being acquired or evaluated, the council may average the appropriate scores and apply this average regardless of whether there is an asterisk